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CONCISE HISTORY

—OF THE—

Journeyman Bakers' National Union

OF THE UNITED STATES.

Published by Order of the National Executive Committee

—BY—

GEO. G. BLOCK,

National Secretary,

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THE JOURNEYMEN BAKERS' NATIONAL UNION

OF THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

Doctor Johann Jacobi, the celebrated fellow townsman of the also celebrated philosopher, Kant, once said in a speech, that the foundation of the humblest labor organization will be of greater consequence for the historian of the future than all the splendid attacks of cavalry on the battlefields to which present historians attach so much importance. If this be true, and true undoubtedly it is in the eyes of social thinkers in whose opinion labor alone will be the corner-stone of society in future generations, then the organization of the class of men employed in the baking trade ought to be regarded as a weighty factor in preparing that state of civilization of which thousands of oppressed toilers dream to-day.

The bakers have in all ages and in all countries been regarded as the helots among the helots. As far as there is a history of that trade it shows that their daily hours of labor were always excessive, their treatment on the part of their employers always bad, and their compensation comparatively lower than that of other workers. As a result of the drudgery to which the bakers as a class were subjected, their intellectual status naturally remained below the standard of other wage-workers and that presented further cause for the continuance of the slavish condition.

The United States of America differed not in the least in that regard from European countries. For many years back working men of other trades began to organize for mutual protection, built up trades organizations and gained advantages through them, while the bakers continued indifferent as to their interests and mistrusted each other.

The condition of the journeymen bakers in the leading cities of the United States was worse than that of the slaves in the South. Many worked seven days in the week (as indeed the French bakers do now in the city of New York for want of an organization) and the hours of continuous toil amounted daily to from fourteen to eighteen hours. It must be remembered that this was night work, performed underground within the atmosphere of one or more ovens at full heat, intermixed with bad odors produced by the process of fermentation or coming from defective sewerage, or both. Many were compelled to board with their employers, who compelled them to sleep in the very cellar hole wherein they had been drudging the last twenty hours. But in many cases there was not even a bed to lie upon, and a number of flour sacks placed on top of the trough served as a bunk where the men threw their tired bodies, undressed and full of perspiration, to rest for from three to five hours. The principal food served to these men by their masters consisted in many cases of cheese, cheap sausage and bread; the beer they had to supply themselves. The wages ranged, according to the grade of work men were able to perform, from two to twelve per week. The general treatment was not much better than that accorded to curs, for wherever men grumbled or showed any dissatisfaction, they were discharged, and the misery of absolute poverty stared them in the face.

It is very natural in a trade where the hours of labor are excessively long, that there must be a great army of unemployed at any time anxious to take the worst kind of a job rather than be idle. This was the case with the bakers, and it not only caused the employers to be independent as far as their men were concerned, but made the men submissive; and whenever the employer demanded more hours of work, or when he reduced their pay, both frequently occurring simultaneously, the men rather submitted than run the risk of being thrown out of work. To be out of work was not for bakers what it was for men of other trades. A class of sharks represented in the bakers' boardinghouse owners lie in wait for such unfortunates. Most of the journeymen bakers being unmarried, were compelled to go to

these bakers' boardinghouses, if for no other reason, for the one that bosses seeking help used these boardinghouses as a sort of labor exchange and of course made the best of it in the way of profit. But I will refer here to a part of the testimony which I presented in 1883 to the United States Senate Committee on Education and Labor on the condition of the bakers of New York City. Referring to these boardinghouse-keepers, I testified:

"When they (the journeymen bakers) are out of employment they live in lager beer saloons, called 'bakers' homes.' There they have all the inducements to drink, and, as they have very little money left when they leave the shop, they enjoy a certain amount of credit, and in fact they are only too often induced to run up pretty high bills in those places. Then the boss comes to the 'bakers' home' to look for his help, and the keeper of the saloon as a rule hires out the one that has got the highest bill, the one that is most in his debt; consequently when the man goes back to work he is bound to work so many weeks to pay off that debt incurred for board and for beer consumed; and as soon as his debts are paid off he visits these places again, so as to keep up good relations with them, and then the very same man induces him to leave his employment again. The men being generally of a very low grade of intelligence, they are entirely in the hands of those who keep these boardinghouses or 'bakers' homes.'"

This was stated in 1883 after an attempt at organization was made in New York. I undertook the task, in 1881, to organize the bakers in New York City, and I can say that I met with considerable success, all circumstances considered. The first thing that I did was to arrange for a statistical census so as to ascertain the actual condition of the men. It was no easy task to get the men to understand the value and often the very meaning of statistics; yet 505 men answered the questions propounded.

That their answers were essentially correct, truthful, and in no manner exaggerated I will prove by additional evidence furnished by the United States census officials, based on figures given by the bosses themselves, for, strange to say, in both cases the figures agree with very trifling differences. Besides this, those answering the questions were, comparatively speaking, the best situated and the most intelligent of the bakers, because the others actually had not sense or intelligence enough to appreciate the value of the information asked of them. The answers we received showed that these 505 hands worked 50,799 1-2 hours per week, or 100 1-2 hours each on an average per week; or, if we distribute their work equally among the six working days of the week, they worked each on an average 16 2-3 hours a day. But the length of their working days were actually very differently distributed. In most bakeries the Sunday labor was no more than five hours on an average. On week days it was almost universally sixteen hours a day, Saturdays excepted, when the number of hours was greater, reaching even twenty-three hours of continuous work. The temperature in which these men worked, eat and slept, in which they spent the whole day and the whole night, was almost unbearable, and the health authorities of New York have never thought it worth while to look after this matter, although there were about 5,000 working men involved in it. Out of these 505 men who answered these questions only 180 were married. The more irregular an occupation is the more work is demanded of the men, the worse the pay, and the worse the condition the men are in, the smaller the proportion of married men. These 505 men who answered these questions gave their wages as \$4,155.50 per week, being on an average \$8.20 for each one, or 8 1-5 cents for each of the 100 working hours. This statement can be perfectly controlled and tested, because I called on the officers of the United States census for a detailed statement of the answers which they received from the owners of the bakeries with regard to the business, as far as the answers were received and tabulated, and we have the answers of 605 employers, given on the United States census blanks, so that we can compare their statements as to the wages—the pay—with the statements of the hands, which we collected ourselves. These employers state that they give work to 2,094 hands, a number more than fourfold greater than those tabulated by us. These employing bakers said that they paid to each employe on an average \$427.74 a year, and deduct from that for board and lodging \$4 a week from each man, or \$208 a year, so as to pay in cash only \$210.74. This amounts to \$4.23 per week in cash, and, altogether, including board and lodging, to \$8.23 per week. Thus the statements of both the employers and the employes agree essentially, there being only the trifling difference of three cents in the average wages per week.

Now, the answers received upon our statistical sheets as to the quality of the

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food furnished showed that on the average it was unsatisfactory; but as there can be no particular scale made by which to designate or describe accurately what is good or what is bad food, I will content myself with stating that it was reported to be unsatisfactory in general. The operatives answering on our blanks the questions with regard to boarding and lodging with the bosses complain that the board was unsatisfactory, or bad, or very bad, and in exceptional cases not sufficient in quantity; and, as regards their lodging, 74 of the 400 men who had to lodge with the bosses reported that they were compelled to sleep in the bake room. Out of the 505, 400 slept in cellars on flour bags or on very poor bedding. Very frequently they did not undress, their clothes being saturated with perspiration from their daily toil and the heated atmosphere, and they had not time enough to undress, or they actually fell down on their lair, forgetting to take off their clothes and lay there until they were called up early in the morning to go to work again. Besides this we have ascertained that one of them was compelled to sleep close by the water closets, one immediately above a horse stable, two had to sleep in the stable, and almost one-half of the rest, who slept in separate rooms, were dissatisfied with the accommodations; a sure sign, considering how little delicate and luxurious these persons are, that the sleeping rooms are very bad when they are unsatisfactory even to such very poor folks. Thus it became evident that the \$4 a week which were charged for board by the bosses was far too high for the board and lodging furnished to the great majority of these men; in other words, that their pitiable wages are in this way still more curtailed. Journeymen can get in New York excellent board for \$4 a week, while these bakery bosses charged \$4 a week for such wretched food as these poor men complained of. Thus I was certainly entitled to assert that the bosses made a profit out of the men's food and lodging, besides what they got out of their labor.

From the same returns of the United States census we get sufficient facts regarding the rate of profit made by the bosses at the other end. If you multiply the number of employed hands, 2,094, by the rate of their yearly average wages, which is given at \$427.74, you get \$895,687.56 as the total amount of wages paid yearly in cash and board and lodging. The net proceeds of the employers were therefore \$1,459,646.44 per year.

The cost of the material used was \$3,987,436 a year, and the products sold amount to \$6,342,770. And, since each employer keeps on an average three and one-half hands, it follows that each laborer produced on an average \$689.33 worth, and gets in the shape of wages only \$219.74 per year in cash, or, including board and lodging, \$427.74 per year. Considering that the boss makes out of each of his hands \$4 a week for board and lodging, which covers almost entirely his own household expenses and the outlay for the laborers, he ought to charge only the wages paid in cash, \$219.74, so that the rate of profit would be, on an average, 3.11 per cent., or, with the board and lodging included in the charge, 1.63 1-2 per cent.

We found among those 505 men no less than 50 who were above forty years of age, and who have continued in the baking business from the age of eighteen to the age of forty-five, on an average twenty-eight years. That was the average number of years that they have been in the business. The average age of all the 505 workingmen was between twenty-eight and twenty-nine years, and the average time that they have been in the bake-shop is eleven years. I doubt very much whether in this country, where the transitions of laborers from one branch of occupation to others are so frequent, any other class of workingmen can be found who exhibit such a long average of endurance, especially at so exhausting and cheerless a business, the followers of which were doomed to a single life and to privations of almost all kinds.

Now, these are figures which have been gathered by the New York Bakers' Union, and of course they are gathered from a very limited number of the persons engaged in the business. We could not get more than 505 of our circulars answered, for the reason that when the sheets were circulated among them many objected to giving their wages. Then, too, many of them overstated their wages, with the view of appearing to be better workmen and seeming to receive more than they actually did receive. But take it all in all, even in its most rosy aspect, the average is a very poor one for any class of workingmen, and these men can claim to be the most poorly paid and the most brutally treated workingmen in the City of New York.

The organization founded in 1880 was, however, short-lived. Consisting of about 5,000 German bakers of New York and Brooklyn they insisted on a general strike, and that against my advice, for I feared that the lack of discipline and of knowledge

of the aims of labor organizations would not warrant them to risk the existence of the organization. Notwithstanding my efforts a strike was resolved upon and a demand submitted to the bosses, that the hours of labor be reduced to twelve per day, fourteen on Saturday; that boarding with the employer be abolished and that the employers must engage men at the labor bureau of the Union and no longer from bakers' boardinghouses. May 2, 1881, all men quitted work and after a demonstrative street parade gathered in Irving Hall, where the bosses were expected to call for their men and pledge themselves through their signatures to the demands of the Unions. A great number of employers complied, but the greater number becoming stubborn, refused. Many of the strikers who happened to have good places, feared that they might lose them and returned to work; others followed and the strike ended after two weeks' duration, in a general stampede of deserters. The bosses who had pledged themselves to comply with the demands of the Union introduced the old system again, for they claimed that their competitors were doing the same, and before long the Union collapsed and the old system prevailed once more.

In saying that the Union collapsed, I mean to say that about one hundred men of about three thousand remained in the organization who were resolved to save the remnants at all hazards. But in the course of the next four years they dwindled down to about thirty-five men who were resolved to keep the banner of the Union waving till a better chance might turn up.

I may say that at the time of the strike in 1881 the excitement among the New York bakers, of which the Brooklyn bakers were a part, extended itself to a number of other cities, such as Newark, Philadelphia, Chicago; but the failure of the New York strike caused discouragement among them and, with the exception of the Newark Union, all either disappeared from the surface or were turned into bakers' sick benefit societies.

Several attempts made by the New York Union to reorganize, proved failures; a number of mass-meetings, called for the purpose of inducing the men to join the Union, so as to be enabled to do something for the improvement of their condition, were futile; the meetings were not attended in a sufficient degree. It is strange to say that the few who still clung to the Union were of the best paid men, the most competent workmen who held the best of positions, but it may not seem so strange when it is considered that this is the case in all other labor organizations; those that require organization most are its greatest enemies.

In April, 1885, I submitted to the few true men who represented the Union at the time a plan for the issuing of a newspaper devoted solely to the education and organization of the journeymen bakers. I was laughed at, but after a sober second thought the solacing opinion prevailed, that after so many futile attempts at organizing the bakers, another way might be tried, which, if it did not help, could not hurt much. I insisted that the paper should be owned and controlled by the Union and if it succeeded in arousing the interest of the bakers in the country and a National Union which I aimed at, should be the result, the paper should then become the property of the National Union.

On May 2, 1885—on the anniversary of the day upon which four years previous the great bakers' strike took place in New York, the first number of the four-paged *German-American Bakers' Journal* appeared in German print.

The appearance of that paper caused quite a sensation among all the bakers of the country. Such a thing as a paper solely for bakers was never before thought of. But it worked, in fact it created, wonders. The best elements in the trade in all cities from Boston to San Francisco greeted that little sheet as the medium which would not only awaken the bakers from their lethargy but would also cause a permanent national organization for mutual assistance in the efforts to elevate the condition of the white slaves in the baking trade.

Of course, the employers also began to fear the effects of the paper and began to talk about a local and a national organization of the employers. The New York bosses, seeing the organization of the men grow from week to week and seeing them acting under the advice of their journal, decided to counteract the effect of the journal by also issuing a paper in the interest of the employers. They borrowed an editor from the New York *Staatszeitung*, and a most curious spectacle was presented: that of employers and employed in the baking trade, who up to that time scarcely knew how to engage themselves in anything outside their daily occupation, waging an intellectual war with each other through their respective literary representatives. But I may say right here, that the bosses soon began to quarrel among themselves, that their organization dwindled down to almost nothing; and their

journalistic enterprise went to naught, while the *Bakers' Journal* still prospers.

After the New York bakers were convinced that the new method worked well, and that the Union was growing, it was decided to call a convention of all other Bakers' Unions of the country to take place January 13, 1885, at Pittsburg, Pa. A call was issued and a number of bakers' organizations responded. At the appointed time the convention took place. Of the fourteen organizations that participated in the first Convention, four were assemblies of the Knights of Labor from Milwaukee, Indianapolis, Pittsburg and Brooklyn, nine Trades Unions and two Bakers' Sick Benevolent societies. The Convention adopted a resolution forming a National brotherhood and adopted the name "Journeyman Bakers' National Union, of the United States of America." A Constitution was adopted, also a number of resolutions, among which one deserves special mention. It was a resolution recommending the local unions to prevent strikes as much as possible, but in the event of stubbornness on the part of the employers, in case of differences, to give preference to the boycott system. The application of that system afterwards proved very valuable and it is due to it, that not only many strikes were prevented, but many of the achievements made were thereby accomplished.

Besides the fourteen Unions that were represented at the Pittsburg Convention there were about six more that were ready to join the National Union, if such were organized. The Convention adjourned after a four days' session to meet again at Chicago, January, 1887. Geo. G. Block was elected National Secretary and editor of the *Journal*, which became the property of the National Union, having been presented by the New York Union on condition that its place of publication be not removed from the City of New York. The first year of the existence of the National Union was not without numerous struggles. The employers in many cities fought hard against the local Unions. What was especially obnoxious to them was the demand for the abolishment of boarding with them. The government of the National Union was to consist of a National Executive Committee composed of seven members which were to be selected from the Local Unions of New York, Brooklyn, and Newark, N. J., whose duties and functions were regulated by provisions of the Constitution.

In New York, especially, the fight was a fierce one. Employers, while willing in most cases to grant an advance in wages, they would under no circumstances grant a reduction of the hours of labor, while the latter was insisted upon by the men. In almost all the cases boycotts were resorted to, but their effectuality depended upon the more or less close connection with other organized trades of the same place. Space does not permit, here, a detailed history of each local Union and their struggles; it must however be stated, that in the cities of New York and St. Louis a number of our members were indicted by the Grand Juries for boycotting, but with the exception of a few light sentences which were imposed by Judge Barrett, in New York in 1886, upon a number of Bohemian bakers in New York almost all cases were either quashed or a settlement was effected with the respective employers. But there was another difficulty in the way of a peaceful development of the National Union. The struggle between the Knights of Labor and the Trades Unions became quite lively and it seemed as though the K. of L. were determined to force the bakers of some cities into the Order. Some highly unpleasant occurrences took place in a number of local unions of which only a few shall be briefly related here. Efforts were made in the cities of Milwaukee, Pittsburg, Boston and Indianapolis by the Knights of Labor to turn local unions into assemblies of the Order after the National Union had established and maintained them at considerable expense and by laborious efforts.

The National Secretary, thinking that this encroachment was only practiced by some over-zealous organizers, addressed the following letter to the Secretary-Treasurer of the Order:

OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL SECRETARY OF THE BAKERS' NATIONAL UNION.

NEW YORK, Feb. 18, 1886.

Bro. Frederick Turner:

DEAR SIR:—I suppose that you are aware of the fact that the bakers have lately organized a National Union and that after considerable exertion and expense. Now before and after this National Union was established, several attempts have been made by organizers of the K. of L. to turn these newly-organized local Unions into assemblies of the K. of L. to the detriment of the National

Union; this has been practiced by one Schilling in Milwaukee, lately in Boston and is now attempted in Indianapolis and in other places. I desire to say, that our National Union is desirous to maintain *friendly relations* with all labor Unions, the K. of L. not excepted, but I believe, if this policy is continued by your organizers, it cannot fail to injure the labor movement. I desire to state also, that the National Union does not object when your organizers organize such bakers into assemblies that have no organization as yet, but we most emphatically protest against the policy of turning local Unions, which we have organized with a great deal of sacrifice, into assemblies under the pretext that they will have less expenses, or by other means of persuasion. Such a course, if continued, necessarily leads to bad feeling and disruptions somewhere. As much as I know, this kind of propaganda is not approved by the Order and it seems that the only cause for all this is the zeal of some organizers to get up as many assemblies as possible regardless of the injury thereby done other Unions.

I suppose you know that the National Union issues a weekly paper devoted exclusively to the interests of the bakers and of which I am editor. You will admit that an injury perpetrated upon the National Union as above complained of cannot be ignored by the paper. I have so far always taken a position favorable to the Order and I would like to continue that course, but I cannot, if the Order permits our National Union to be undermined by your organizers whose actions are apparently more dictated by the pay they receive, than by the principles of good fellowship among organized labor.

I hope, friend Turner, to hear from you soon, what you propose to do in the matter. Our organization numbers to-day eighteen locals which will be soon doubled and trebled, as I can say from the communications that I receive. Should I become compelled to attack this policy openly, it would be an unpleasant task for me but no blame shall then rest on me. Yours fraternally,

GEO. G. BLOCK, *Nat. Sec.*

The following evasive and very characteristic reply was received in return:

OFFICE OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY-TREASURER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Feb. 26, 1886.

Geo. G. Block, New York:

DEAR SIR:—In answer to your communication of the above date, I would ask if you are a member of the Order of the K. of L.

If you are, I presume you remember the obligation taken. We never knew that the K. of L. was proscribed from bringing into its folds all branches of honorable toil.

Yours respectfully, FREDERICK TURNER, *G. S. T.*

The National Executive Committee very reluctantly came to the conclusion that they would have to place themselves on the defensive against the Order, from whom they had hoped and expected to receive aid and comfort in their efforts to better the condition of the members of their trade, to prevent the weakening of their organization. In Baltimore an assembly of bakers was chartered, having employers and employees as members, to frustrate the demand of the Baltimore Local Union for a reduction of working hours, in compliance with the Union scale. In Pittsburg, the Local Union, which was also an Assembly of the K. of L., was ordered on strike by District Assembly, No. 3. Master Workman Evans, since deposed for drunkenness, who after the strike lasted for two weeks, being closeted with the principal employer, S. S. Marvin, in his office for several hours, ordered them to resume work under the old conditions. These and similar occurrences led to a somewhat strained feeling, but what all the efforts on the part of the National Union could not accomplish was accomplished by the Order itself in compelling these assemblies to contribute toward the maintenance of an army of officers of the Order at high salaries and towards the purchase of real estate, while for the elevation of their own condition nothing, or very little, was done. This helped to overcome the difficulties; these assemblies reposed greater confidence in the National Union and left the Order altogether or split up, as the case was in Brooklyn, N. Y., and Boston, Mass., while the one portion remained within the Order, the other applied for charters from the National Union.

The Constitution of the National Union requires that in each year an official census be taken by the local unions, the schedules for which are furnished by

the National Executive Committee. The first National Census was taken September, 1886.

Answers to the questions sent out were received from 1,123 members located in twenty-six different cities. This did not show a lively interest in the matter by the members of the National Union, and shows that many of them were not aware of the importance of comprehensive and thorough statistics. As far as the beneficial action of the National Union was concerned, the result obtained from the 1,123 answers must be considered as very favorable.

Considering the hours of labor first, it appeared that the 1,123 were working, only a year ago, 7,015 working days per week, while since the establishment of the National Union the same number of men worked only 6,905 days. So the 1,123 men who filled out the blanks, gained 110 working days by making six instead of seven days a week's work within one year. Now for the working hours: A year previous the 1,123 worked on an average 100,922 hours per week. Since the establishment of the National Union the working time has been reduced to 85,113 hours per week. The reduction thus amounts to 15,809 hours, or, expressed in weeks of six working days each, to 2,635 weeks; or expressed in percentage to 15 1 2 per cent.

Of the 1,123 members 375 state that through the Union their wages were raised \$823 per week, making for each of the 375 a weekly increase of \$2.19.

The filled blanks also teach us that 664 of the 1,123 were not steadily employed during the twelve months, losing together 7,828 working weeks, or an average of 11 8-10 weeks per man and year. We had no figures for the previous year, and were therefore unable to state whether the proportion of enforced idleness had increased or diminished. Counting the 7,828 weeks as equal to \$82,976.80, the average earnings of 664 partially employed amounted to only \$8.20, apportioned to the 1,123, their average weekly wages would be reduced to \$9.18 for each man.

In addition to the gains made, as expressed through the above figures, the local Unions of the various cities obtained other benefits: In New York, for instance, where sleeping in cellars was a most common thing among bakers, the Board of Health was induced by the Union to interfere; the same was done in cases where bad odors of defective sewerage threatened the health of the men. The boarding system was thoroughly shaken and in the great number of cases boarding with the bosses was actually abolished.

Considering all this and considering further the moral influence of the continued agitation and the awakening of the activity of the mental faculties among its members by inducing them to follow the development of the great drama known as the social movement, and by taking an active part therein, the National Union could justly be proud of its accomplishments within the comparatively short period of its existence.

At that time the National Executive had issued forty-five Charters to Unions in almost all parts of the country, and all these Unions were engaged in hard struggles either against the onslaughts of the employers who were bound to destroy the Union if in their power, or in the efforts of the men to improve their condition by their Union. To assist the local Unions the National Executive issued a label of which the subjoined is a *fac-simile*.



This label was to be put on the loaves of bread made in shops where the employers complied with the demands of the Union. While this label met with consid-

erable opposition by the employers in some cities, and in others its introduction has not been accomplished, it must be said that some Unions would have been wiped out of existence had it not been for the label and the subsequent support of Organized Labor of other trades; in fact the increase of wages, the decrease in the hours of labor, and general independence of the men is in many cities due to the Union Label. Wherever the label proved a failure it was due to the inefficient management of the Unions themselves or the lack of support on the part of Organized Labor in general. It may not be out of place to state that this label was endorsed by the American Federation of Trades, of which the National Union is a member, and also by a number of National Trades organizations.

In the first year of the existence of the National Union there were but few strikes, as strikes were in no wise encouraged; but wherever strikes became necessary the National Union supported them as liberally as the small *per capita* tax of five cents per month would allow.

The Second Convention of the National Union was held January 11, 1886, in the city of Chicago; twenty-eight delegates and the National Secretary composed the same. At that Convention the Constitution was thoroughly revised and a number of practical measures adopted. A Board of Appeals was created to be elected by the members of the Detroit Union, whose duty it became to decide all cases of appeals taken against decisions rendered by the National Executive Committee. It was furthermore resolved by the Convention, that the Executive Committee should, as an experiment, make an eight-page issue of the official journal, and devote one page to English reading matter, so as to keep the English-speaking members of the National Union informed of the doings of the various local Unions in the country. Should, however, this experiment not have the desired effect, *i. e.*, should the increase in the circulation of the journal not cover the additional expenditures, then the Executive Committee should have power to discontinue the publication of the English page. Resolutions were also adopted that efforts should be made on the part of the local Unions to introduce the eleven-hour workday, with thirteen hours for Saturday, which, however, was made subject to a general vote, before it was to be enforced. Another resolution to continue the agitation for the abolishment of boarding with the employers was also adopted; a new system of stamps for regular dues of the members was adopted, to the end that the *per capita* tax of five cents, payable to the National Union, be paid by purchasing these stamps. A resolution was also adopted to join the American Federation of Labor, and one to abolish honorary membership, which was in vogue under the old Constitution. The Convention adjourned, after a session of five hard working days.

After the Convention a general vote was taken on the reduction of the hours of labor to eleven per day, and thirteen on Saturday, and a great majority voted affirmatively. Hence at the beginning of the Spring season of 1887 a lively agitation began throughout the whole country for the reduction of the hours of labor. While at that time a general opinion prevailed that the National Union ought to have insisted on ten hours, with twelve for Saturdays, it was otherwise held that a number of Unions, especially those recently organized, had not even made the first efforts to drag themselves out of the mire of the old condition of servitude and that mostly for want of a thorough organization in their respective localities. One of these Unions was Union No. 24, of San Francisco, which on May 1, 1887, began a powerful and bitter struggle for the abolishment of Sunday labor, of boarding with employers, and to have their hours of labor reduced from eighteen and twenty to twelve per day. This strike was one of the grandest and at the same time fiercest that any of the local Unions of the National body had as yet entered into. The strike ended victoriously for the men, yet the achievements made are so great that that brave Union has to concentrate all efforts of vigilance and sacrifice for years to come, to prevent a relapse into the old condition. This strike had cost the National Union considerable money and even necessitated the levy of a special assessment of twenty-five cents on each member of the National Union, which amount however was promptly and cheerfully paid. A number of other strikes took place at the same time in various cities and some lively boycott crusades were entered upon against individual employers and organizations of the same.

The idea of issuing the English page of the *Journal* had to be abandoned after about four months' experiment. *John Swinton's Paper* was then declared the English organ, wherein the National Secretary published each week such official notes as were necessary to be brought before the English-speaking members. *John*

Swinton's Paper however had to suspend for want of proper support, whereupon the Executive Committee selected the *Workmen's Advocate*, of New Haven, as the official organ for the English-speaking members.

The number of Charters issued to local Unions up to the time of the second census had increased to sixty-six, nine of which alone were in the State of Ohio. These local Unions are situated in the following cities: New York, N. Y., Brooklyn, N. Y., Newark, N. J., Boston, Mass., Milwaukee, Wis., Hartford, Conn., Cincinnati, O., New Haven, Conn., St. Louis, Mo., Buffalo, N. Y., Indianapolis, Ind., Cleveland, O., Detroit, Mich., St. Paul, Minn., Ansonia, Conn., San Francisco, Cal., Sacramento, Cal., Elizabeth, N. J., Louisville, Ky., Pittsburg, Pa., Jersey City, N. J., Syracuse, N. Y., Minneapolis, Minn., Philadelphia, Pa., Rochester, N. Y., Denver, Col., Bridgeport, Conn., Erie, Pa., Columbus, O., Wichita, Kas., Los Angeles, Cal., Albany, N. Y., Nashville, Tenn., Chicago, Ill., East Saginaw, Mich., Poughkeepsie, N. Y., Paterson, N. J., Richmond, Va., Grand Rapids Mich., Zanesville, O., Springfield, O., Meriden, Conn., Waterbury, Conn., Providence, R. I., Sandusky, O., Toledo, O. The Unions of New Orleans, La., and Kansas City, Mo., had to be suspended under the Constitution, and have collapsed, but their reorganization is only a question of time.

The second annual census was taken in the month of September, 1887. It furnished many interesting facts in regard to the progress made by the National Union. Thirty-five cities returned filled blanks against twenty-six of the previous year's census. 2,183 members participated against 1,123 of the year before. The facts gathered thereby were as follows: of the 2,183 bakers 850 were married, and of whom 654 had 1,704 children; 428 of the total number had already had bakeries of their own, and after struggling hard and failing, fell back again into wage servitude; of 1,183 bakers who filled these blanks 128 were under the age of twenty years; 1,304 between twenty and thirty years; 470 between thirty-one and forty years; 214 between forty-one and fifty years; fifty-seven over fifty years of age.

Of this number 761 learned the trade in the United States; 1,123 in Germany; 66 in Ireland; 42 in Austria; 32 in Bohemia; 32 in Sweden; 25 in Switzerland; 16 in Hungary; 15 in England; 14 in Scotland; 14 in France; 5 in Holland; 5 in Poland; 4 in Norway; 3 in Canada; 3 in Russia; 2 in Denmark; 1 in Australia; of that number were active at the trade less than five years, 268; between five and ten years, 726; between eleven and fifteen years, 470; between sixteen and twenty years, 321; between twenty-one and twenty-five years, 139; between twenty-six and thirty years, 118; over thirty years, 103. Thirty-five did not answer that question at all.

Out of the whole number of 2,183 journeymen bakers, 831 were still boarding with their bosses, while only 675 remained in board this year, which means that, from each 100 bakers an average of thirty-eight boarded with their employers in 1886 and thirty-one in 1887. This shows a continual increase in the number of those that have become independent in that regard since the establishment of the National Union.

A great advantage is also shown by the decrease of the hours of labor compared with the previous year, as the following table will show:

| In 1886. | | | | | In 1887. | | | | |
|---------------|---|---|------------------|---|---------------|---|---|------------------|---|
| 36 men worked | | | 8 hours per day. | | 49 men worked | | | 8 hours per day. | |
| 45 | " | " | 9 | " | 82 | " | " | 9 | " |
| 353 | " | " | 10 | " | 749 | " | " | 10 | " |
| 186 | " | " | 11 | " | 360 | " | " | 11 | " |
| 833 | " | " | 12 | " | 735 | " | " | 12 | " |
| 158 | " | " | 13 | " | 82 | " | " | 13 | " |
| 218 | " | " | 14 | " | 42 | " | " | 14 | " |
| 180 | " | " | 15 | " | 15 | " | " | 15 | " |
| 91 | " | " | 16 | " | 16 | " | " | 16 | " |
| 19 | " | " | 17 | " | 4 | " | " | 17 | " |
| 48 | " | " | 18 | " | 4 | " | " | 18 | " |
| 1 | " | " | 19 | " | 0 | " | " | 19 | " |
| 19 | " | " | 20 | " | 0 | " | " | 20 | " |

This table shows that the number of men working from eight to eleven hours per day has increased, while the number of those working from twelve to eighteen

hours have decreased. 185 men in twenty different places reported to have been on strike last year.

The following table shows how the hours of labor were reduced in the various localities that had returned filled blanks giving the increase or decrease as compared with the previous year of 1886.

| Locality. | Number of Workers. | ON ORDINARY DAYS. | | | | FROM FRIDAY TO SATURDAY. | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------|------------|-------------|--------------------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| | | Year 1887. | Year 1886. | Less Hours | More Hours. | Year 1887. | Year 1886. | Less Hours | More Hours. |
| Ansonia, Conn..... | 10 | 112 | 115 | 3 | .. | 114 | 115 | 1 | .. |
| Albany, N. Y..... | 33 | 349 | 364 | 15 | .. | 395 | 396 | 1 | .. |
| Brooklyn, N. Y..... | 53 | 634 | 653 | 19 | .. | 779 | 829 | 50 | .. |
| Roston, Mass..... | 62 | 662 | 688 | 26 | .. | 831 | 847 | 16 | .. |
| Bridgeport, Conn.... | 29 | 317 | 327 | 10 | .. | 335 | 335 | .. | .. |
| Cleveland, O..... | 78 | 778 | 1101 | 323 | .. | 957 | 1282 | 325 | .. |
| Chicago, Ill..... | 273 | 2820 | 3278 | 458 | .. | 3112 | 3754 | 642 | .. |
| Cincinnati, O..... | 43 | 484 | 617 | 133 | .. | 630 | 669 | 39 | .. |
| Detroit, Mich..... | 51 | 537 | 569 | 2 | .. | 580 | 564 | .. | 16 |
| Erie, Pa..... | 10 | 98 | 116 | 18 | .. | 105 | 129 | 24 | .. |
| Grand Rapids, Mich... | 23 | 329 | 235 | 6 | .. | 212 | 228 | 16 | .. |
| Jersey City, N. J..... | 81 | 980 | 1015 | 35 | .. | 1148 | 1206 | 58 | .. |
| Indianapolis, Ind..... | 71 | 697 | 723 | 26 | .. | 707 | 755 | 48 | .. |
| Louisville, Ky..... | 49 | 661 | 691 | 30 | .. | 816 | 840 | 24 | .. |
| Los Angeles, Cal..... | 22 | 231 | 297 | 66 | .. | 355 | 352 | .. | 3 |
| Milwaukee, Wis..... | 20 | 241 | 238 | .. | 3 | 291 | 279 | .. | 12 |
| Meriden, Conn..... | 8 | 95 | 95 | .. | .. | 99 | 99 | .. | .. |
| New York, N. Y..... | 475 | 5332 | 5592 | 260 | .. | 6328 | 6735 | 407 | .. |
| Oakland, Cal..... | 17 | 174 | 193 | 19 | .. | 237 | 294 | 57 | .. |
| Philadelphia, Pa..... | 32 | 495 | 528 | 33 | .. | 593 | 613 | 20 | .. |
| Pittsburg, Pa..... | 68 | 768 | 866 | 98 | .. | 901 | 1002 | 101 | .. |
| Paterson, N. J..... | 20 | 238 | 248 | 10 | .. | 276 | 283 | 7 | .. |
| Rochester, N. Y..... | 25 | 327 | 339 | 12 | .. | 374 | 374 | .. | .. |
| Richmond, Va..... | 17 | 192 | 192 | .. | .. | 224 | 224 | .. | .. |
| Sandusky, O..... | 9 | 116 | 124 | 8 | .. | 144 | 152 | 8 | .. |
| Syracuse, N. Y..... | 23 | 240 | 264 | 24 | .. | 262 | 279 | 17 | .. |
| St. Paul, Minn..... | 24 | 277 | 278 | 1 | .. | 305 | 314 | 179 | .. |
| San Francisco, Cal.... | 159 | 1586 | 1894 | 308 | .. | 2254 | 2376 | 22 | .. |
| Sacramento, Cal..... | 15 | 451 | 169 | 18 | .. | 176 | 194 | 18 | .. |
| St. Louis, Mo..... | 153 | 1746 | 1818 | 72 | .. | 2121 | 2215 | 94 | .. |
| Springfield, O..... | 16 | 212 | 219 | 7 | .. | 270 | 267 | .. | .. |
| East Saginaw, Mich... | 18 | 197 | 265 | 68 | .. | 219 | 292 | 73 | 3 |
| Washington, D. C.... | 147 | 1700 | 2239 | 539 | .. | 2155 | 2969 | 814 | .. |
| Wichita, Kas..... | 26 | 276 | 288 | 12 | .. | 310 | 318 | 8 | .. |
| Zanesville, O..... | 14 | 146 | 153 | 7 | .. | 152 | 177 | 25 | .. |
| Total..... | 2,183 | 23,928 | 26,791 | 2,863 | 3 | 28,767 | 31,757 | 2,990 | 34 |

This shows that the average hours of labor were reduced within that one year on ordinary days to ten and nine-tenths hours, and on nights from Friday to Saturday, to thirteen and one-half hours; a gain of eight and one-half hours per week. When we add thereto from the previous year's statistics, we find a decrease of two hours per day, making twelve hours per week, together a total decrease of the hours of labor of *twenty hours per week per man within the two years of existence of the National Union.*

It has always been argued by trades unionists, that reducing the hours of labor increases the pay. Paradoxical as this may appear, it has, nevertheless, always been thus, and we can prove, in this case, that not only the hours of labor were reduced but also that the wages increased in the same ratio.

The following table, containing the rates of wages according to the various

grades of labor performed by the men, will show the wages received in 1867; this table shows, besides, the number of weeks the men were out of work; and it further shows the advance in pay which the men received directly in consequence of their organization, which is not to be confounded with the indirect increase of wages consequent upon the reduction of the hours of labor:

| Locality. | Foremen and First Hands. | | Second Hands. | | Third Hands. | | Fourth Hands. | | Unem- ployed. | | Received in- creased wages through the Union. | |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|--|-----------|
| | Number of Workers. | Dollars per week. | Number of Workers. | Dollars per week. | Number of Workers. | Dollars per week. | Number of Workers. | Dollars per week. | Number of Workers. | Number of weeks. | Number of Workers. | Dollars. |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Ansonia..... | 4 | 68 | 6 | 55 | .. | .. | .. | .. | 4 | 25 | .. | |
| Albany..... | 19 | 290 | 9 | 103 | 7 | 60 | .. | .. | 17 | 223 | 6 | 12.50 |
| Brooklyn.... | 14 | 246 | 36 | 481 | 4 | 36 | .. | .. | 28 | 203 | 6 | 11... |
| Boston..... | 28 | 445 | 23 | 254 | 9 | 99 | 2 | 22 | 26 | 200 | 27 | 54.50 |
| Bridgeport... 13 | 180 | 9 | 109 | 5 | 51 | 3 | 24 | 10 | 110 | 4 | 8... | |
| Chicago..... | 112 | 1717 | 119 | 1467 | 27 | 290 | 14 | 156 | 190 | 1505 | 11 | 17... |
| Cleveland.... | 20 | 312 | 51 | 646 | 5 | 50 | 1 | 10 | 59 | 561 | 61 | 159... |
| Cincinnati... 15 | 176 | 22 | 182 | 2 | 15 | 2 | 20 | 22 | 141 | 9 | 17... | |
| Detroit..... | 17 | 227 | 29 | 353 | .. | .. | .. | .. | 36 | 463 | .. | |
| Erie..... | 6 | 67 | 4 | 34 | .. | .. | .. | .. | 5 | 53 | 7 | 12... |
| Grand Rapids, 13 | 189 | 8 | 78 | 1 | 9 | .. | .. | .. | 11 | 82 | 13 | 26.50 |
| Jersey City... 39 | 413 | 40 | 390 | 10 | 72 | 2 | 14 | 42 | 334 | 20 | 49... | |
| Indianapolis.. 22 | 283 | 46 | 514 | 2 | 24 | 3 | 30 | 28 | 166 | 46 | 71.50 | |
| Louisville.... 27 | 210 | 24 | 141 | 6 | 14 | 1 | 3 | 20 | 138 | 6 | 6.50 | |
| Los Angeles... 9 | 177 | 5 | 78 | 6 | 81 | .. | .. | 15 | 110 | 17 | 37.50 | |
| Milwaukee.... 9 | 65 | 9 | 57 | 2 | 15 | .. | .. | 17 | 137 | 1 | 1... | |
| Meriden..... 3 | 40 | 4 | 34 | 1 | 9 | .. | .. | 5 | 53 | .. | | |
| New York.....157 | 2237 | 228 | 2186 | 72 | 474 | 22 | 57 | 181 | 3173 | 138 | 286... | |
| Oakland..... 8 | 120 | 6 | 120 | 2 | 17 | .. | .. | 8 | 115 | 5 | 7... | |
| Pittsburg.... 28 | 281 | 30 | 213 | 6 | 33 | .. | .. | 36 | 229 | 13 | 18... | |
| Paterson..... 8 | 106 | 8 | 83 | 1 | 4 | .. | .. | 11 | 73 | 3 | 4... | |
| Philadelphia.. 24 | 229 | 15 | 111 | 1 | 4 | .. | .. | 23 | 143 | .. | | |
| Rochester.... 5 | 60 | 13 | 128 | 7 | 61 | .. | .. | 9 | 59 | 2 | 8... | |
| Richmond.... 7 | 76 | 5 | 40 | 3 | 23 | 2 | 10 | 1 | 15 | .. | | |
| Sandusky.... 5 | 33 | 4 | 23 | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | | |
| Syracuse.... 11 | 175 | 11 | 130 | 1 | 10 | .. | .. | 10 | 99 | 14 | 39... | |
| San Francisco, 59 | 1112 | 77 | 927 | 12 | 136 | 7 | 61 | 116 | 1485 | 85 | 212... | |
| St. Paul..... 13 | 173 | 8 | 89 | 2 | 20 | .. | .. | 14 | 119 | 16 | 41.50 | |
| Sacramento... 5 | 87 | 6 | 88 | 2 | 29 | 2 | 26 | 6 | 35 | 2 | 6... | |
| St. Louis.... 63 | 772 | 71 | 652 | 14 | 111 | 1 | 9 | 82 | 824 | 18 | 35... | |
| Springfield, O. 7 | 60 | 10 | 90 | .. | .. | .. | .. | 7 | 52 | .. | | |
| East Saginaw, 5 | 56 | 9 | 73 | 4 | 31 | .. | .. | 10 | 82 | 17 | 47... | |
| Washington.. 40 | 505 | 88 | 1287 | 15 | 124 | .. | .. | 38 | 199 | 127 | 215... | |
| Wichita..... 23 | 321 | 3 | 30 | .. | .. | .. | .. | 25 | 165 | .. | | |
| Zanesville.... 5 | 57 | 4 | 34 | 5 | 27 | .. | .. | 2 | 16 | .. | | |
| Total..... | 833 | \$11,565 | 1040 | \$11,280 | 234 | \$1939 | 62 | \$442 | 1114 | 11,405 | 674 | \$1401.50 |

According to this table the direct increase in wages accorded to 674 men amounted to \$1401.50; while in the year previous, under the same heading, 375 men received \$821.

The rate of wages received stands thus:

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------|---------------|---------|
| 831 Foremen received..... | \$12,621; | Per Head..... | \$15.12 |
| 1040 Second Hands received.... | 12,700; | " " | 12.20 |
| 234 Third Hands received..... | 2,230; | " " | 9.50 |
| 62 Fourth Hands received.... | 505; | " " | 8.17 |

The following is a comparison of the rate of wages of 1886 and 1887:

| | | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1886, Foremen, \$13.25; | 2d Hands, \$ 9 50; | 3d Hands, \$7.16; | 4th Hands, \$7.32 |
| 1887, " 15.12; | 2d " 12.20; | 3d " 9.50; | 4th " 8.17 |

The wages therefore increased as follows:

| | | | |
|---------------------|---------|-----------------------------|-----------|
| With foremen..... | \$1.87; | Equals to an increase of 14 | per cent. |
| " Second Hands..... | 2.70; | "28 $\frac{4}{10}$ | " |
| " Third Hands..... | 2.34; | "32 $\frac{3}{4}$ | " |
| " Fourth Hands..... | .85; | "11 $\frac{1}{2}$ | " |

In comparing the results of the three censuses of 1881, 1886 and 1887 in its main features, we repeat the following on the scale of the average wages per man:

In 1881, \$8.20 per week; in 1886, \$10.60 per week; in 1887, \$12.95 per week.

The hours of labor decreased on the average as follows:

In 1881, sixteen and two-thirds hours per day; in 1886, twelve and one-quarter hours per day; in 1887, ten and nine-tenths hours per day.

These facts speak volumes. Whoever cannot be convinced by these figures as to the great value and the actual indispensability of Trades Unionism, cannot be convinced at all. These advantages were obtained with comparatively very little sacrifice on the part of the members. Aside from the initiation fee, which, according to the Constitution of the National Union, cannot be less than One Dollar, and which in but a few cases is more than that, the regular dues amounted to twenty-five cents per month and, as within the two and a half years of the existence of the National Union only one special tax of twenty-five cents was levied, in support of the strike in San Francisco, the whole pecuniary contribution of the members, within the two and one-half years, would have amounted, initiation fee included, to \$7.25 per member had all joined the Union at the time of its organization, which, however, was not the case. We are very liberal in our calculation when we assume that the average cash contribution of the members did not exceed five cents per member, on an average, per week. Now compare this trifling investment with the advantages gained! Of course, the running expenses of the National Union are comparatively low, as there are but the National Secretary and his assistant who receive moderate salaries and who have in return to communicate with about 70 Unions besides issuing the official journal, which is an eight-page weekly paper.

But besides the material improvement, as stated above, the bakers have also advanced intellectually. It may be stated here that, years ago, before any one thought of bakers' organizations, the bakers represented a great number of those that are generally regarded as the rough element of the community; there was no bakers' ball, no bakers' picnic, that did not terminate in a free fight or violent act of some kind. This is no more so; in fact we have had ample opportunity to observe that on such occasions painful care is taken to prevent such or similar occurrences, and that the bakers' pleasure affairs are to-day carried on as peaceably and orderly as they can be.

The bakers of to-day read more papers and books than ever before; they are interested in the affairs of the country more than ever before, and are especially active in the labor movement, of which they expect great results for themselves and the country.

The Journeymen Bakers' National Union expend a great part of their funds in organizing the bakers of such localities as are not yet enlightened. This pamphlet is intended to assist us in that work and wherever it may go, we expect that friends of Organized Labor will do what is in their power to assist us in that work, so that we may complete the organization throughout the land and fully succeed in emancipating a class of toilers whose social standing is still, in some places, by far worse than that of the slaves of the South has ever been.

All further information will be cheerfully rendered when desired, by

GEO. G. BLOCK, *National Secretary,*

190 William street, New York, N. Y.



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